

Message Text

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ACTION OPIC-06

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STATE PASS OPIC

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TAGS: EINV, BAGB, ID

SUBJECT: AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL INVESTMENT MISSION PROGRAM - INDONESIA

REF: STATE 28511

1. DR. ALHAMBRA RACHMAN INFORMED EMBOFF THAT IN RESPONSE TO SECOND AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL (ABC) TELEGRAM HE HAD SENT MESSAGE SAYING THAT HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE DATES FEB. 12-14 AND THAT JORDAN COULD COME. ALHAMBRA FELT JORDAN'S PRESENCE IN AREA WOULD BE CHANCE TO RESTATE THE AGREEMENTS ABOUT NATURE AND CONDUCT OF ABC PROGRAM IN INDONESIA REACHED DURING UNOFFICIAL VISIT OF ABC TEAM IN DECEMBER.

2. WITH RESPECT TO PARAS. TWO AND THREE OF REFTTEL, OPIC AND ABC APPEAR TO BE CONTINUING TO BASE THEIR APPROACH ON TWO PREMISES: THAT, IF THEY COULD GET APPOINTMENT WITH THE CHIEF OF STATE, ALL DOORS WOULD BE OPENED AND, SECONDLY, THAT IT WAS BOTH POSSIBLE AND IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW A PRE-SET TIME TABLE. WHILE BOTH PREMISES MAY APPLY TO SOME OTHER COUNTRIES, THEY DO NOT APPLY TO INDONESIA.

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3. ACCORDING TO DR. ALHAMBRA RACHMAN, WHEN KENNETH MUELLER OF THE COUNCIL SAW PRESIDENT SUHARTO, THE PRESIDENT LISTENED, BUT MADE NO COMMITMENTS. HE MERELY NODDED TO THEIR EXPLANATION. YET, MANILA'S 17118 REPORTED THAT PRESIDENT SUHARTO "ENDORSED THE PROGRAM'S CONCEPT AND PROCEDURE AND AGREED THAT

IT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED". THAT IS NOT THE SIGNAL WHICH THE INDONESIANS PRESENT RECEIVED.

4. APPARENTLY FIRMLY BELIEVING IN THE LATER PRMISE, THE ABC INSISTED ON CARRYING OUT ITS STEP TWO BY SCHEDULING A TEAM TRIP IN EARLY DECEMBER, DESPITE AN INITIAL NEGATIVE REACTION BY THE GOI TO THE TIMING OF THE TRIP AND ADVICE FROM THE EMBASSY TO POSTPONE IT. THE INCIDENT WAS A REFLECTION OF A NOT UNNATURAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN URGE TO "GET ON WITH THE JOB" AND THE INDONESIAN DESIRE TO DO THINGS AT THEIR OWN PACE. THE RESULTS, PREDICTABLY, FELL SHORT OF THE ABCS EXPECTATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCIL OFFICER AT END OF THAT VISIT ENCOURAGED US THAT COUNCIL HAD BEGUN TO UNDERSTAND THE INDONESIAN ENVIRONMENT; THAT IS, OFFICER EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED TO COORDINATE CAREFULLY, TO FULFILL AGREED COMMITMENTS, AND TO OBTAIN APPROVAL BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH PLANNED ACTIVITIES. WE BELIEVE HE ALSO APPRECIATED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STYLE IN WHICH ACTIVITIES ARE UNDERTAKEN HERE AND OF THE FACT THAT PRESSURE FOR RAPID ACTION CAN BACKFIRE. HE SAID AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT IN THE FUTURE THE AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL WOULD PROCEED VERY CAREFULLY AND WOULD OBTAIN ALL THE NECESSARY CONCURRENCES BEFORE UNDERTAKING FURTHER STEPS IN ITS PROGRAM.

5. IN CONCLUSION, WE WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE OUR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUPPORT FOR THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ABC PROGRAM AND OUR BELIEF THAT, PROPERLY HANDLED, DEFINITE BENEFITS CAN RESULT. HOWEVER, ONCE MORE WE WISH TO REMIND ABC AND OPIC THAT IMPORTANCE THEY APPARENTLY PLACE ON CALL ON PRESIDENT SUHARTO IS MISPLACED AND THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE RECOURSE TO THE PRESIDENT WHEN THINGS GO WRONG. FURTHER, WE WISH TO ENCOURAGE ABC TO ADAPT ITS PROGRAM TO INDONESIA, NOT TO EXPECT IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OR RESULTS, BUT RATHER, TO SETTLE IN FOR THE LONG HAUL, OVER WHICH SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS, MAY LIKELY RESULT.
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